

G6294

Istanbul, 1 November 2021

## 38<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TOBB Plaza  
Istanbul, Turkey  
Thursday, 25 November 2021 at 14:00 hrs

### MINUTES OF THE 37<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

#### FIRST SESSION

##### I. CHAIRMEN'S OPENING REMARKS

**Mrs. Asli Calik, President of BSEC-URTA**, welcomed all participants and thanked TOBB and TOBB-UND for hosting the BSEC-URTA statutory meeting in Istanbul on 2 April 2021. At the same time BSEC-URTA President welcomed and thanked the high level guests, the Secretary General of IRU, Mr. Umberto de Pretto, the Deputy Secretary General of BSEC Organization, HE Ambassador Traian Chebeleu, and the Advisor of PABSEC, Mrs Natia Gabrindashvili for their online participation and readiness to contribute to the debates under the items of the General Assembly's agenda.

**Mr. Umberto de Pretto, Secretary General of IRU**, welcomed the high level guests and representatives of member associations participating in the General Assembly, congratulated TOBB and TOBBUND for hosting it and showed his disappointment to be present only online together with the participants to the General Assembly due to COVID-19 Pandemic. He stated that currently much attention should be paid to digitalization of transport procedures, in particular eTIR, e CMR, ePermit and eVisas, along with the promotion of single window and joint control procedures reducing waiting time for vehicles at national border crossing points and facilitating customs checks. In this regard the entry into force on 25 May 2021 of Annex 11 to the TIR Convention as legal basis for digitalization of TIR procedures for further facilitation of international trade will be a foundation stone of a new era for the TIR system. IRU also supports the efforts of BSEC and BSEC-URTA for digitalizing the BSEC Permit System and its coverage extension and multiple trip usage.

**The Deputy Secretary General of BSEC Organization, HE Ambassador Traian Chebeleu**, in his online intervention, welcomed the participants and thanked for being invited to the meeting. He showed that BSEC attaches great importance to cooperation with BSEC-URTA and IRU in joining efforts to answer the challenges of COVID19 Pandemic in order to promote faster, safer and more competitive transport in BSEC region.

##### II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Agenda (G6204/corr) was adopted, unanimously.

##### III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Minutes of the 36<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly (G6205) were adopted, unanimously.

##### IV. UND PRESENTATION ON ROAD TRANSPORT SYSTEM IN TURKEY AND ON OWN ACTIVITIES (Oral Presentation)

**Ms. Evren Bingöl, UND Vice Chairperson of the Executive Committee**, made a presentation on the Road Transport System in Turkey and on UND's activities in regard facilitation of road transport and services provided for members.

## V. REPORT OF THE BSEC-URTA MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (Oral Presentation)

**Mrs. Asli Calik, President of BSEC-URTA and Chairperson of the meeting** reported that the BSEC-URTA Management Council held its meeting prior to the General Assembly meeting and considered the documents of the General Assembly mainly:

- Draft Activity Report on BSEC-URTA Priorities in 2020 (G6206) and the Priorities for 2021 which have been identified by BSEC-URTA Management Council at the outset of the New Year 2021
- Draft Working Programme 2020 (G6207)
- Draft Budget 2021 (G6208).

The BSEC-URTA Management Council unanimously endorsed all the above mentioned documents and agreed to be presented to the General Assembly today for consideration and decision.

## VI. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH BSEC

**H.E. Ambassador Traian Chebeleu, Deputy Secretary General of BSEC** made a presentation on activities jointly developed by BSEC, IRU and BSEC-URTA during the COVID19 Pandemic for reduction of waiting times and facilitation of border crossings along the main BSEC road and maritime routes. He highlighted that through cooperation and coordination of the before mentioned international organizations the BSEC Permit Project was continuously developed and improved with a significant increase in country quotas and extension of usage for 5 countries from transit and bilateral trips to 3rd country transport operations, too. Ambassador Traian Chebeleu expressed his hope for enlargement of the geographical coverage of the Permit and welcomed the decision of the Republic of North Macedonia authorities to join the system.

**Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA** informed the General Assembly that 7 BSEC Member States, namely Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, agreed to distribute 1500 permits in 2021. Armenia continues with 800 permits. 5 Member States (Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine) agreed to enlarge the usage of the permit on a voluntary basis to 3rd country transport operations. He stated that AMERIT (North Macedonia) shows interest in participation of North Macedonia in the BSEC Permit system subject to decision of their competent authorities and acceptance of BSEC Organization. As far as digitalization of the exchange of permits is concerned the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Turkey and TOBB took an initiative to start an e-PERMIT pilot project. At an initial stage Turkey will work with Ukraine to digitalize the exchange of road transport permits between the two countries including the BSEC Permit, too. After completion of this initial stage the Pilot Project will be extended to all BSEC Member States on a voluntary basis.

The General Assembly appreciated the good cooperation and coordination with the BSEC Organization under the BSEC Permit Project, expressed the hope for enlargement of the geographical coverage of the Permit, welcomed the decision of North Macedonia authorities to join the system and called for speeding up its digitalization.

## VII. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH IRU

**IRU Secretary General, Mr. Umberto De Pretto** provided information to participants on the impact of COVID19 Pandemic on global and regional trade and transport and on the IRU call on governments for implementation of recovery measures. He thanked BSEC Organization for supporting the IRU recovery measures addressed to governments and appreciated the quick reaction of the BSEC Secretary General on informing the BSEC member states on such measures and on the call for their application.

At the same time the General Assembly appreciated the presentation of the IRU Adviser, Mr. Oleg Kamberski on the decrease of drivers' shortage via improving working conditions including reduction of border waiting times removing legal and economic barriers (access to the profession, min. age/diversification), upskilling/reskilling and improving the reputation of the profession.

It was also well noted the information provided by the IRU Business Development Executive, Mr. Erman Ereke on the IRU Business Connection Project having as a main objective to increase the visibility of transport companies and to enable them to serve different stakeholders in the logistics chain.

#### VIII. AUDIT REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF BSEC-URTA BUDGET FOR 2019 (G6198) AND 2020 (G6227)

**Ms. Viliانا Ivanova (AEBTRI)** elected Auditor of BSEC-URTA for 2019-2020 presented the General Assembly the Audit Report on Implementation of BSEC-URTA Budget for 2019 (G6198) and 2020 (G6227). It was noted that the International Secretariat during 2019 and 2020 has executed the budget in a proper way and has obtained savings which were added to the reserve fund of BSEC-URTA.

#### IX. ACTIVITY REPORT ON BSEC-URTA PRIORITIES IN 2020 (G6206)

**Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA**, made a progress report regarding the BSEC-URTA Priority Activities in 2020 (G6206). In this connection, the General Assembly evaluated the Activity Report on the BSEC-URTA Priorities in 2020 as follows:

- *Increase and diversify BSEC-URTA revenues:* BSEC-URTA economic entity established in 2019 has continued consultations with TOBB-UND Company in order to develop a business model for promoting their services on regional level.
- *Develop further and expand BSEC Permit to Eurasia:* 7 BSEC Member States, namely Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, agreed to distribute 1500 permits in 2020 increasing with 50% the figure of the 2019. Armenia agreed to keep the quota amount to 800 permits. 5 Member States (Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine) agreed to enlarge the usage of the permit on a voluntary basis to 3rd country transport operations. BSEC-URTA supported technically the BSEC in designing and printing the 2021 Quota of Permits which have been produced and submitted to the PERMIS on 20 November 2020. AMERIT (Republic of North Macedonia) is supporting participation of the Republic of North Macedonia in the BSEC Permit system lobbying competent national authorities to ask BSEC Organization to accept affiliation to the BSEC Permit system. The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Turkey and TOBB took an initiative to start an electronic PERMIT pilot project. At an initial stage Turkey will work with Ukraine to digitalize the exchange of road transport permits between the two countries including the BSEC Permit, too. After completion of this initial stage the Pilot Project will be extended to all BSEC Member States on a voluntary basis.
- *Support Working Party on Border Crossing Problems in BSEC Region:* BSEC-URTA International Secretariat paid site visits to some border crossing points along the Balkan road transport corridors during 2-5 March 2020. The visits were done in order to assess the actual situation in regard to the border crossing waiting times and the related problems faced by the drivers, in particular problems due to immigrants forcing and penetrating the commercial compartments of vehicles. We have monitored and worked with IRU, BSEC, TRACECA, ECO, Turkic Council, National Governments and Member Associations for diminish of the impact of Covid-19 on activities of BSEC-URTA members. During the Meeting of the BSEC Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods held online on 10 June representatives of BSEC-URTA stressed that international transportation will play a significant role in the recovery of trade and of the economies of BSEC member states during and post Covid pandemic. BSEC-URTA put forward concrete proposals to the BSEC governments for the next 6 months in order to facilitate road transport of goods in the BSEC region and speed up the recovery process of economy. A short movie was realized presenting as good example the truck parking area of TOBB-GTI Co at Kapikule Border Crossing point. The movie and information about TOBB-GTI Co was presented to the BSEC Steering Committee for Facilitation of Road Transport, Working Group on Customs matters, Working Group on Trade and Economic Development, Working Group on Transport, PABSEC and the EC DG MOVE experts for further promotion to governments of Member States.
- *Follow eTIR Pilot Projects:* After implementation with success of the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of the eTIR Project, the Customs authorities of Iran and Turkey drafted a cooperation agreement on fully coverage of road transport operations between the two countries by eTIR guaranties.

The draft agreement is still unsigned. With the help of US Aid, AITA and IRU the TIR EPD application is fully operational for Moldova and thus creating the necessary framework for an e-TIR Pilot Project between Moldova and Ukraine. Concerning the e-TIR Project connecting Ukraine with Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan the Customs authorities and member associations signed protocols in order to start implementation of the Pilot Project

- Promote eVisa for professional drivers: The International Secretariat presented the good examples in the region and beyond in granting eVisas (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Oman, USA) during the transport related meetings of BSEC and requested consideration by member states the digitalization of issuance procedures of such visas. During the Covid-19 crises in the first half of 2020 many problems related to visas of professional drivers occurred in the EU space and IRU in coordination with BSEC-URTA addressed the EC DG HOME for seeking solutions. Next to extension of the validity of visas and some derogations related to number of days permitted to stay in the EU space the EC is working to launch in 2021 of a Pilot Project on issuance of e-Visas.

The Activity Report on BSEC-URTA Priorities in 2020 (G6206) was adopted, unanimously.

#### X. BSEC-URTA WORKING PROGRAMME FOR 2021 (G6207).

The Chairperson gave the floor to **Mr. Adrian Albu, BSEC-URTA Secretary General** who presented the International Secretariat proposals for the Working Programme for 2021. The Meeting, on this occasion, reviewed and reconfirmed the vision, mission and strategic objectives of the BSEC-URTA. The BSEC-URTA Working Programme for 2021 (G6207) was adopted, unanimously.

#### XI. ICCIMA REQUEST FOR BSEC-URTA OBSERVER STATUS

The Chairperson gave the floor to **Mr. Adrian Albu, BSEC-URTA Secretary General** who presented the request of ICCIMA for Observer Status to the BSEC-URTA. The General Assembly evaluated the recommendation of the Management Council for granting the Observer status of BSEC-URTA to the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) in accordance with BSEC-URTA Statutes Provisions of Article 6 item b) and decided to grant it for a term of 3 years starting as of 2 April 2021 with a contribution fee of 2,000 EURO/year.

#### XII. BSEC-URTA BUDGET FOR 2020 (G6208)

The Chairperson gave the floor to **Mr. Adrian Albu, BSEC-URTA Secretary General**, to present the draft BSEC-URTA Budget for 2021 (G6208). The BSEC-URTA Budget for 2020 (G5083) was adopted, unanimously.

#### XIII. ELECTION OF BSEC-URTA PRESIDENT FOR THE TERM OF OFFICE 2021-2024

**Mr. Adrian Albu, BSEC-URTA Secretary General** informed the General Assembly that for the position of BSEC-URTA President term of office 2021-2024 there is only one proposal coming from ANALTIR President, Mr Ilirian Mataj who addressed the International Secretariat in due time and in accordance with provisions of BSEC-URTA Statutes nominating the candidacy of Mr Eduart Kasa, General Director of ANALTIR. The General Assembly unanimously voted Mr. Eduart Kasa as BSEC-URTA President with the term of office 02 April 2021- 31 December 2024. At the same time, the Secretary General and the newly elected President thanked and congratulated Mrs Asli Calik for the valuable job done as President of BSEC-URTA for the term of office 2017-2020.

#### XIV. ELECTION OF BSEC-URTA DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENTS FOR THE TERM OF OFFICE 2021-2022

At the proposal of **BSEC-URTA President Mr. Eduart Kasa**, the General Assembly elected Mrs. Olivera Miovska, representative of AMERIT as Deputy President term of office 2 April 2021 -31 December 2022. At the same time the General Assembly elected Ms. Nino Chkheidze representative of GIRCA (A to Z rule) and Mr. Fatih Sener representative of UND (Z to A rule) as BSEC-URTA Vice Presidents for the term of office 02 April 2021 - 31 December 2022.

## **XV. NEXT MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Mrs. Asli Calik** proposed the meeting that the 38<sup>th</sup> Meeting of BSEC-URTA General Assembly of to be held in Istanbul, Turkey in autumn 2021 at a date to be later decided upon. The proposal was endorsed by the General Assembly.

## **XVI. MISCELLANEOUS**

Under Miscellaneous agenda item participants approved the BSEC-URTA Declaration for 2020 to be dully submitted to the Provincial Directorate of Associations. At the same time the General Assembly highly appreciated TOBB and TOBB-UND for hosting the BSEC-URTA statutory meeting in Istanbul on 2 April 2021 and warmly thanked them and their valuable staff for the excellent organization of the meeting and for the warm hospitality extended to all participants.

## **XVII. DECISIONS OF THE 37<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Participants adopted and undersigned the Decisions of the 37<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Istanbul on 2 April 2021 as prepared by the International Secretariat.

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